PANCHAYATI RAJ

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A hand operated fan is being used to winnow paddy.

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EDITOR : A. P. SHOME
COVER DESIGN : D. S. VERMA

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LETTERS

LITTLE DEMOCRACIES IN INDIA

Sir,

IT IS indeed heartening to note the growth of so many "little democracies" on the Indian soil. It is our duty to create a sound and fair atmosphere so that these democracies can flourish and gather strength from within.

Any attempt at rural upliftment, however, is bound to be jeopardised if the people themselves do not take active interest in the development activities undertaken to change the face of rural India.

Each village in India should have a Cooperative Society which will act as a "friend in need" to all classes of rural people *i.e.* agriculturists, artisans, etc. It will lend money, fertilizers and supply raw materials to industries at a cheaper rate and make arrangements for sale of products. It will be a good day for every one of us when land in villages will be consolidated to form a single cooperative farming society. This is the best way of increasing agricultural production.

Needless to say, the most vital factor in the rural upliftment is the development of man. Here the role of education is very great indeed. Each village should have a school to educate its people. Education will enable people to understand the real values of life and allow them to develop their own personalities. It will also make people conscious of their duty and responsibility to the country as a whole.

We must not forget that self-government will become real only if the village leaders can make themselves self-reliant and capable of coping with the need not only of their own villages but also that of the adjacent ones. They should have missionary zeal and initiative to do good to the community. Their mind should be mixed up with some sort of patriotic flavour and a spirit of service to mankind. They should realise that they have been privileged to be the "fore-runners" of rural reconstruction in independent India and as such they will have to rise to the occasion.

Yours etc.,
Shubhendu Sarker
Extension Officer (Panchayat)

6-5-65
Alipurduar Block-I,
P.O. Alipurduar,
Jalpaiguri (West Bengal).

(*Continued on page 12*)

KORHALLI : THEN AND NOW

B. A. SANADI

KORHALLI, of Alland Block in Mysore State, came into prominence when it earned the distinction of being the best Panchayat in the State in 1964-65. The village with a population of 1,627 made a remarkable progress within a span of a decade or so. Korhalli has stepped out of a dark horrible past and is marching towards a bright future. The whole village is throbbing with a new life and the villagers are confident to leave behind a better Korhalli for their future generations.

What a past Korhalli had! An obscure village surrounded on all sides by hillock and completely cut off from the outer world. There were no roads, no communications with outside. Korhalli remained in ignomity. It found mention only on police record as a hiding place for dacoits who infested the locality. The surrounding hillocks provided the dacoits with shelter who plundered often the poor helpless villagers of Korhalli for food and money. The land lay waste as the villagers had a constant fear that their standing crops would any time be burnt or taken away by the dacoits.

This was Korhalli before the hero of the village Shri Anna Rao Patil came forward to save it. With indomitable courage Shri Patil faced the situation and soon he was able to rally the whole village round him. After that the matter was easy. Any one who steps in Korhalli today can see for himself what inspired leadership has done to this village in ten years. The commencement of the Community Development programme in the Taluka facilitated and expedited the translation of Shri Patil's ideas into reality. It was in 1955, when the Community Development programme was launched at Alland Taluka, the village Korhalli started to breathe freely and undertook something for the betterment of the village community as a whole.

A tempo was created in the village by the leader, Shri Patil and the Block staff and the same was maintained undeterred by the enthusiastic batch of young workers of the village who were anxiously waiting for such an opportunity.

MIRACULOUS CHANGE

Once the wheels were set to motion there was a miraculous change in outlook. The hands that were once engaged in dacoity were now made to dig wells for irrigation. The hands that once burnt down the ripe corns were now busy in ploughing fields. There was not a single idle hand anywhere in the village. But all these things did not take place overnight.

Setting the entire village community in motion was not an easy job for Shri Anna Rao Patil. There were objections, and even oppositions. But Shri Patil was not a man to admit defeat and withdraw. He continued his efforts with determination and ultimately the hesitant minds were convinced and joined him in his bid to change the face of Korhalli. The village Panchayat, the cooperative, the school, the Youth Club—all these organisations came into being one by one, all geared with the same motive of bettering the lot of the people.

This awakened spirit, united strength and the consequent achievements in the village are being appreciated by all today. Korhalli has been put prominently on the map of rural India. With course of time it is bound to add more feathers to its cap.

If one comes to the village he is sure to get a warm reception. The villagers would eagerly show him what they have done and what more they intend to do.

The old man may take the visitor to the temple that they have recently constructed, the young men will proudly take him round the village to show their achievements.

"This is our school building worth Rs. 20,000 out of which our people contributed to the tune of Rs. 7,800," they will say. "We are also running a new High School with a free hostel attached to it." The school building with its neat appearance is certainly a landmark in the village.

"Here is the Maternity Centre of the village."

The Panchayat Chairman adds with pride and pleasure: "The Panchayat has provided drainage facilities at a cost of Rs. 17,000, latrines worth Rs. 2,750, drinking water wells at a cost of Rs. 11,000, internal roads costing Rs. 3,000, and thirty new houses for the poor people under rural housing scheme at a cost of Rs. 25,000." And so on.

The most notable feature of the village is the work done by the Village Volunteer Force. The members of Village Volunteer Force have contributed their labour continuously for six months and constructed tarred roads throughout the village. No doubt, they have taken technical advice from the concerned Department. But the actual work has been done by the entire adult population of the village including even women and children. If this work had been done by paid labourers, it would have cost the Panchayat about Rs. 80,000. The construction of such costly tarred roads had its own problems. The Village Volunteer Force thought that the tarred roads with drainage alongside should be based on a sort of town planning. So they had to demolish certain houses that lay on the proposed roads. The Panchayat has now taken up constructing 101 houses outside the old village for those who were rendered homeless for the construction of roads and also those who had no house in the village at all. This has been taken up as a phased programme. In the first phase 30 houses were started during the year 1964-65. The second phase of the programme will start soon.

The Village Volunteer Force also helped the Electricity Department to erect 51 poles in the village for which 1,500 mandays were contributed freely.

The people of Korhalli live mostly on agriculture. They have adopted modern methods and implements of cultivation and thus been able to increase the food production by 25 per cent. The recent village production plan has helped them in systematising the investment in, and income from agriculture. The villagers have adopted the agricultural production plan with zeal and vigour and a number of Taluka-level and District-level prizes have been won by the cultivators of the village for their increased production of jowar, sugarcane, paddy, etc.

There are about a dozen wells, and three diesel pump-sets for irrigation. The cultivators are still anxious to increase the number of wells and pump-sets for irrigation as they have realised that irrigation and irrigation alone will help them to increase agricultural production in their dry land. Otherwise, they have entirely to depend upon the average rainfall of 25 inches which is seldom regular. The wide afforestation on the surrounding hillocks, the anicut and soil conservation works taken up under the Pilot Project may also help them to get more rain and grow more foodgrains in future.

The cultivators use insecticides to protect their crops from pests and diseases. The village has 375 farm yard manure pits which produce about 3,000 tons of manure and 100 compost pits which produce about 700 tons of compost manure for their crops. The village cooperative is active enough to distribute improved seeds, fertilizers, insecticides, etc. It has also provided a godown to store the agricultural produce of the village.

The Panchayat members have yet a number of things to say : "Yes, we plan not only in agriculture, but also in animal husbandry. People here take sufficient care of their cattle which are equally important for improved agriculture. We have decided to develop a new breed in our village for which we maintain a breeding bull."

"We have organised a carpentry workshop to produce our own implements."

The women of the village have not lagged behind. There are two women members in the Panchayat. The women have an association of their own which provides them with leisure time activities and also training in crafts so that they can contribute something to their family income.

The story was quite interesting. Everybody was anxious to say something, to show something. Meanwhile I saw a middle aged woman who was going to the well to fetch water. When I referred to the drinking water facility in the village, I was told, "We have constructed three drinking water wells. But we intend to implement rural water supply scheme in our

Brick-built houses are fast coming up at Korhalli to shelter the homeless.

village. Much of the time will be saved by our women when they get water at their doors. The time thus saved would certainly be useful for other household and agricultural work."

The enlightenment among the women folk in this village has helped the men to achieve better progress in all spheres of life. During the last four or five years the Mahila Mandals of other villages have been visiting this model village Korhalli at least once a year to have inspiration and ideas.

Korhalli today looks like a modern township humming with developmental activities. This has been possible for the one man Shri Anna Rao Patil, who roused villagers from their age-long slumber and instilled in them a new hope, a new responsibility. Shri Patil has been rightly honoured by the State and Central Governments. He will go down in the history of Korhalli and that of the country as a whole as a man who could rise above self and devote to the betterment of the community. The country today requires men like Shri Patil.

KARMADA ON THE MARCH

IF YOU HAPPEN to pass by Balodabazar—Bhatapara road in Raipur district of Madhya Pradesh, do not fail to visit village Karmada even though it involves a detour of a few weary miles. You will be greeted with the dance and music of Madiya-Adivasis. Karmada is the mirror of modern India which reflects the new urge of the nation.

Karmada is not prominently placed on the rural map of India. It is an obscure village with 1,300 souls. But enthusiasm overrides numbers. The enthusiastic and disciplined band of villagers constructed a two-mile long road in record time of three days to overcome the difficulties of traffic and trade. It was truly a labour of love for them all. They marched every morning from the village to the centre of work chanting 'Rama Nama' and singing *bhajans.*

This spectacular achievement of Karmada has surprised all who knew its people a few years ago. There was then a strong feeling of groupism in the village. Each one was for himself and nobody bothered if the devil took the hind-most. When the village came to be included this year in the Package Programme, the Block Development Officer and the Agriculture Extension Officer addressed the Panchas and pursuaded the villagers to undertake the construction of the road so that everything good and desirable might begin to flow into the village. The Sarpanch took the leading part and what was impossible a few years ago became a reality.

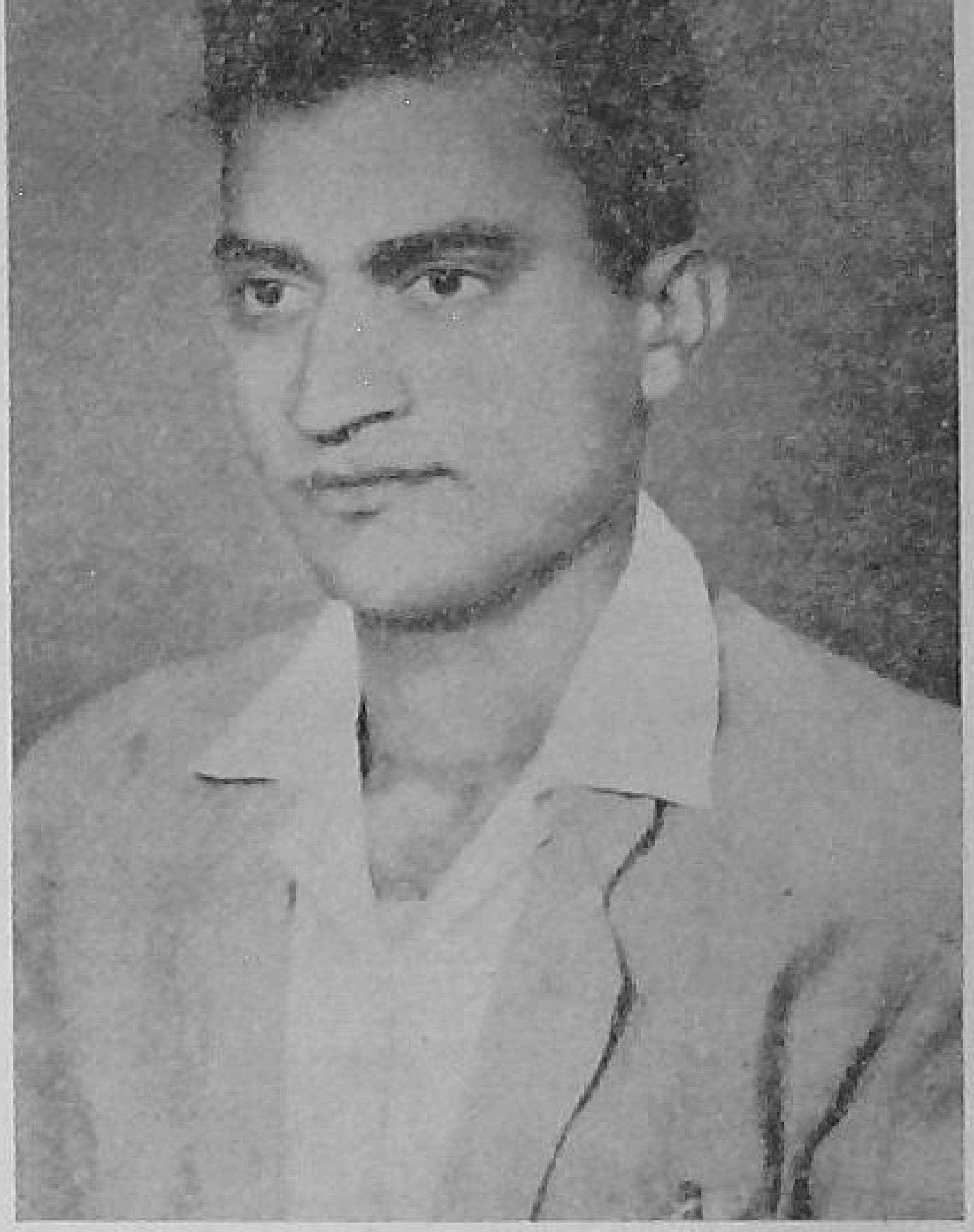
There were interesting sidelights. For instance, there were some shramadanis who worked without taking any food as they had not earned any wages the previous day. When the villagers came to know of it, they arranged for their food. Even school-going children and old women lent a hand.

With the completion of the road, the villagers are experiencing a new surge of confidence. Now they have taken an oath to double the production of their farms through collective efforts. The use of chemical fertilizers and improved seed is becoming increasingly popular in the village. One has little doubt that it will fulfil its oath under the leadership of its Sarpanch—Shri Dhannaram Varma—and the officers of the Block. It is already a beaconlight to the villages of the surrounding areas.

(*Courtesy* : *Samaj Sevak*)

PRABHAKAR SAHOO

An Ideal Gram Sevak



Shri Prabhakar Sahoo

To CHANGE THE face of rural India only one thing is required—sincere leadership. The people are always eager to obey the leader if they are once convinced of his ability. This has been seen at Aska II (Sheragada) Block of Orissa where a young Village Level Worker, Shri Prabhakar Sahoo has earned the love of the people by dint of hard work. Shri Sahoo was adjudged as the best Village Level Worker in Ganjam district.

Shri Sahoo rightly believes that examples are always better than precepts. He lays more stress on demonstration than on theories. That is why he has been able to usher in a spectacular change in his Block in a very short time.

When Prabhakar joined Narendrapur Gram Panchayat some years back the first thing that he noticed was utter ignorance on the part of the cultivators of the benefits of chemical fertilizers. They were carrying on the old method of cultivation and traditional poverty was trailing them. Prabhakar immediately started his door to door campaign. The first year consumption of chemical fertilizers recorded only 1,000 kg.

Prabhakar did not lose heart. He arranged for demonstration on the field of some cultivators. The success attained in such demonstrations convinced the cultivators. The demand for chemical fertilizers began to increase. In 1961-62 the consumption was to the tune of 12,700 kg. In 1962-63 it was 22,700 kg. and in 1963-64 the consumption was more than doubled to 53,500 kg. and in 1964-65 it was 54,000 kg.

Chemical fertilizers alone cannot increase the food production sufficiently, improved seed is also necessary. Prabhakar used the field of a cultivator Shri Bhaj Ram Polai as a demonstration centre. Instead of using the local Mahapal paddy, Prabhakar sowed B.A.M. 9.

Shri Polai was deeply impressed when he found that the improved seed had yielded him 20 mds. more than he got usually. After that it was not needed to persuade any one to use improved seed. Polai's field was enough to convince the cultivators and create a demand for improved seed.

Prabhakar has shown his remarkable quality of approaching people in so many cases. Chemical fertilizers were supplied to the area on deferred payment basis. At first there was much difficulty in the realisation of loan from the users. But Prabhakar tackled the situation efficiently. As a result of his personal approach the loan was not only repaid in full, people also felt encouraged to take benefit of the scheme. The estimated loan of fertilizers has risen from Rs. 7,000 to 40,000.

COLD STORAGE

The Government wanted to build a cold storage for potatoes provided the cost was shared by the potato-growers. The cultivators had not the faintest idea of what a cold storage was. Naturally there was a poor response from the potato-growers. Prabhakar once again applied his personal charm. An amount of Rs. 2,000 was obtained within a fortnight as a share capital from the potato-growers of Prabhakar's Block. The Village Level Workers of other blocks followed his example and now a cold storage is under construction at Aska.

MAHILA SAMITI

Prabhakar's field of persuasion has not been restricted to men only. He has also convinced the womenfolk of his area of their role in the work of village upliftment. Ultimately a Mahila Samiti was formed at Ramchandrapur. The members of the Samiti have built about 30 compost pits and adopted Japanese method of paddy cultivation. They have also made quite a good number of smokeless ovens in the village. Every member has got a fruit garden around her house.

Prabhakar also persuaded the young girls to give up betel chewing and save at least 25 P daily. From these savings National Defence Deposit Certificates are purchased.

Thus Prabhakar Sahoo has shown the people of Aska Block that it is in their hands to improve their lot. Prabhakar is not only getting the mission of his life fulfilled but also setting a noble example before all Gram Sevaks and Sevikas in the country.

PROSPERITY THROUGH COOPERATION

V. PADMANABHAN

THE PATH TO prosperity is not easy. It is an uphill task. But it is always attainable if the journey is made with sincerity and a cooperative mind. This has been shown by the Madurai Tiruvappadayarkoil Hand Pounding Cooperative Society at Sellur in Madras. The Society which was organised exclusively for the uplift of the denotified tribes, was registered on June 28, 1957 and started functioning about two months later.

At the beginning, the Society had only 37 members most of whom were women. As they could not subscribe more than Rs. 37 in total, the State Government came forward with a share capital loan of Rs. 50 per head. In addition, a working capital loan of Rs. 10,000 and a reserve fund subsidy of Rs. 2,000 were also sanctioned to the Society.

Once the financial stability was assured the Cooperative Society made its march towards prosperity with confidence. It started with eight workers in 1957 and within seven years the number of workers rose to 40 ensuring steady income to the families of *ex*-criminal tribes of Sellur. The number of members now has more than doubled (75) the initial membership of 37. The Society had produced hand pounded rice worth Rs. 6,748 in 1957-58. The production touched Rs. 46,000 in 1963-64 and the sale resulted in a net profit of Rs. 1,600. The Society supplies hand pounded rice to the public and government institutions like hospitals, hostels and jails.

The Society is also dehusking paddy received from individuals and makes an income out of it. Some of the firms and most of the paddy owners utilise this Society for dehusking paddy. Incidentally, this is the only Society in Madras which sells 'Ag Mark' hand pounded rice.

About four years back the Society started a Model Production Centre with financial assistance of Rs. 4,000 as grant and Rs. 5,000 as loan from the Government. Under this scheme, 45 worker-members were given training in modern method of boiling, drying, and producing hand pounded rice. The special features of this scheme are demonstrated in the exhibitions held in and around Madurai City.

As more and more members from *ex*-criminal tribes joined the Society to avail themselves of the opportunities given by the Government, a special training scheme was started during 1963-64. About 45 new members in three batches were given training about the various simplified methods of production of hand pounded rice. A grant of Rs. 844 was received from the Khadi and Village Industries Board and this amount has been utilised as stipend to the trainee-*cum*-worker-members during the training.

The Society has purchased a site at Nagamalai Pudukottai, 6 miles from Madurai, on the Madurai-Usiampatty Road to construct godown, office, drying yard etc. Necessary financial assistance has been provided by the State Khadi and Village Industries Board for such purposes.

In the present days of rising prices, the members of the Society, which is now one of the best working societies in Madurai district, have fully realised that it is only the cooperative societies which can help the poor people and much benefit can be achieved by cooperative effort in uplifting their economic condition. With course of time the Society is bound to reach the goal ensuring an all-round prosperity for its members.

KOYALI : WAR ON POVERTY

M. P. DAIYA

KOYALI, an obscure village near Baroda in Gujarat recently hit the headlines when an oil refinery was located there. But Koyali has also to its credit the pride of being a centre of development activity other than the Gujarat Refinery Project. Though modest in scale, its achievement is no less important on that account, for its results mean food for a number of hungry mouths, employment for countless idle hands and prosperity for a nation of teeming millions.

Enterprising farmers of Koyali and a couple of neighbouring villages like Ranoli and Dhanera have, by dint of hard work and perseverence demonstrated how by a relentless war with the elements of nature, vast stretches of land which would otherwise be lost to humanity have been reclaimed for profitable cultivation.

WHAT IT COSTS

Soil erosion, as everybody is aware, is a serious problem in our country. Soil washed from the fields resulting from unwise management of land and water means food gone from the market, less stuff for us to eat and higher cost for what remains. It means less materials for the industries, less business for merchants, less potential for employment and less prosperity for the country.

Gujarat has an estimated 10 lakh acres of such land of ravines or what are locally known as *kotars*. These are spread over the banks of big rivers like the Mahi, Narmada, Tapti, Sabarmati and Banas, as also small rivers and their tributaries. Every year more and more such land is getting out of cultivation on account of erosion. This not only renders people landless and poor, but also threatens the village sites, roads, bridges and their social life.

STORY OF COURAGE

The story of land reclamation at Koyali is a story of courage, conviction and persistent effort to achieve results. It started as far back as 1915 when Bakorbhai Patel, a farmer possessing about 40 acres of land, launched his venture, worked on it ceaselessly and saw that the entire stretch was converted into a green belt laden with fruits and vegetables.

Encouraged by these results, Jivabhai, the son of Bakorbhai Patel and his three brothers, embarked on another experiment in reclamation of a 100-acre patch in 1951. Their experience of such work stood to their great advantage and within a comparatively short span of a decade, the Patels have been able to reclaim the new area.

The soil in the Koyali region is rich and alluvial. It is claimed to be the most fertile and perhaps the best available in the State. Besides growing tobacco, tur, castor and bajra, Jivabhai has raised fruit trees like mangoes, lemon, *ber, ambla, chiku* and also *babul* and *neem*. The number of trees has almost been doubled from what they were in 1915. The trees take from a minimum of three to a maximum of seven years to yield the maximum production and the income per tree is estimated at Rs. 10 to Rs. 50 per year. Thus the farmers of Koyali have been able to better their lot by fighting constantly with nature.

The Department of Agriculture of Gujarat Government has, after making a study of work done at Koyali and neighbouring villages, taken up the demonstration work on reclamation at *kotars* at the main pilot demonstration station near Gambhira in Borsad taluka of Kaira district in an area of about 1,000 acres. Substations have also been set up at Namisara and Sandhasal in Savil taluka and Padamla in Baroda taluka. In the Panchmahals district, the work is being done at Sant Road, Vavdi, Panchelav, Garbada and other places.

The farmers of Koyali deserve grateful thanks from their counterparts all over the country for showing how to fight aginst the evil of land erosion.

Left *Two women busy in paddy husking at Mulki*

Right *A view of the production-cum-sales centre of Coir Industries Society at Mulki where about 12 boys and girls are under training.*

THEY ALSO SERVE

Men, women and children all over the country are today engaged in building a better India through the Community Development Programme. A new life and a new awareness is surging through the villages, and the people are animated with new energy and enthusiasm. The Programme is slowly changing the face of rural India. Suddenly the people have realised that they have a responsibility to the nation and to future generations. They have felt an urge to step forward and bear the burden of nation building.

The accompanying pictures illustrate development activities in two Blocks—Somvarpet and Mulki—of Mysore, and give a glimpse of what is happening in rural India today.

Left *An active Community Development Worker of Somvarpet, Kumari Kenchamma has won the first prize in Block-level competition in compost manure making by scientific methods. She has also been adjudged as the best progressive youth in Taluka-level youth rally held in 1964-65.*

Right *A view of the beautiful kitchen garden raised by Shri Veerappa, a member of Somvarpet Taluka Board. Shri Veerappa is seen weeding the garden while his wife Smt. Ponnamma, who is the Vice-President of the Local Mahila Mandal, is watering plants.*

Right *A view of the garden raised by students of a senior primary school at Gowdahalli village of Somvarpet Block. Four acres of land around the school are lush green with vegetables and fruit trees.*

Right bottom *Shri Bernad Meranda of Hiriyangadi in Mulki Block proudly exhibits the produce of his field. He has installed a power driven pumpset to irrigate his field which yields three crops of paddy annually. He is also a registered seed grower.*

Shri Kajore Patel showing a pair of maize produced by him

MAIZE PRODUCTION INCREASED FOUR TIMES

Kajore Patel's Achievement

BREAKING WITH the tradition is, of course, a difficult task and more so for an old sentimental Rajasthani farmer. But Shri Kajore Patel, aged 50, of village Baran in Bhilwara district of Rajasthan is an exception.

With strong determination and hard labour he has not only changed the lot of his own, but has also made his fellow cultivators realise that the surest way to earn more is to grow more, and for that one must adopt improved methods.

Shri Kajore Patel is now regarded as the hero of Baran village. Every man talks about the wonders, he has worked in his fields by producing hybrid maize four times more than usual yield. Even a year back it was very difficult for Shri Patel to get even 20 mds. of maize from his field. But this year he succeeded in harvesting 78 mds. of maize from the same field.

On being asked the secret of this good yield he said, "I took special care in adopting the improved methods of cultivation. My fellow villagers had local seed of maize to sow into their fields, but it was I, who arranged to take hybrid seed from the Panchayat Samiti, Baneda. Before sowing maize, however, I harvested methi in my half acre land. After that I ploughed the land and left it open."

He added, "I ploughed the dry field twice again and gave 16 cart load of farm yard manure and spread it well in the field. In the third week of June, once again I quenched the thirst of the land and ploughed it twice."

"Did you apply fertilizers also ?" "Yes", came the reply. "First I prepared a compound of 1¼ mds. Super Phosphate and 5 mds. cow dung of gobar gas plant. I spread this in the farm in rows along with the improved seed."

"What precautions did you take after sowing the seed ?" His reply was, "I had sown the maize into lines keeping a distance of two feet with each other. After 15 days I arranged weeding out useless plants in the field and spread 20 Kg. of Ammonium sulphate in the roots of the plants and irrigated the field."

"To avoid the plants from the attack of warms, I thought it necessary to spray B.H.C. Powder. When the plants grew up to the height of about 2 feet the same practice was again repeated. The third dose of fertilizer of Ammonium sulphate was also applied. Luckily it had rained giving the soil adequate moisture. Weeding was regularly done to maintain one-foot space among the plants.

Shri Kajore Patel said, "My fellow cultivators cut their crops at the end of September but my field was still green. The hybrid maize takes a little more time than the ordinary maize. But, there being the fear of harm by wild animals, I also harvested in the first week of October."

Asked about the reaction of the fellow cultivators, Shri Kajore Patel said, "This success gave incentive and encouragement not only to him but to his fellow cultivators also. They have started adopting the improved methods of cultivation. This year, the villagers have purchased 40 bags of hybrid maize seed for ensuing season."

He was convinced that he would harvest a better crop this year and with course of time all the cultivators would follow his method and thus change their lot.

(*Courtesy* : *Rajasthan Vikas*)

A DREAM REALISED

Story of Dewan Chand

I. S. SHARMA

IT WAS a hard life for Dewan Chand. He struggled and struggled to have a smooth living—to have a life not constantly dogged by poverty. Two square meals with no worries for tomorrow's bread—that is what he wanted, what he dreamt of. But what a life he had instead! He had to sit in his father's shop at village Razapur situated at a distance of two miles from his own village Babarpur in Gharaunda Block in Karnal district of Punjab. To bring stocks for the shop Dewan Chand had to undertake daily a journey to Panipat, the nearest town situated at a distance of five miles from the village. On the top of all, there was constant want in the house. Dewan Chand's father did not have enough money to maintain a good provision. He had to depend entirely on the daily sale proceeds for replenishment of stocks.

Dewan Chand did not like this life of daily drudgery. He wanted to try his luck in other fields. With the consent of his father he tried many independent jobs like sewing, bangle and cap selling, etc. But the cherished goal of a happy comfortable life in a village eluded him. Whatever he tried did not bring him luck. Constant failures resulted in frustration. Dewan Chand was almost a lost soul.

A NEW TURN

But fortunately for Dewan Chand his dark clouds got a silver lining when in September 1963 a training centre for soap making was opened by N.E.S. Block Gharaunda at village Babarpur. Dewan Chand with new expectations visited this training centre and had discussions with the demonstrator. He wanted to know about this trade and its potentiality for increasing his income. Dewan Chand frankly told the demonstrator about his meagre income and how he aspired after a comfortable life. The demonstrator who was impressed at Dewan Chand's keenness and simplicity encouraged him to join the training centre.

So Dewan Chand became a trainee at the Centre. The stipend—a meagre amount of Rs. 12.50—was no attraction for him. He wanted to learn the technique of soap making only to fulfil his aim in life. He was sincere and hard working and the demonstrator had a very high opinion of his ability.

When the training was completed the demonstrator approached the Block Level Extension Officer (Industries) for a loan of Rs. 2,000 to Dewan Chand to enable him to buy accessories for soap manufacturing. The Department of Industries took no time to sanction the loan but they wanted to have a surety. Well, Dewan Chand knew none who would take this risk for him. Once again the demonstrator of the training centre came to his rescue. He requested the Sarpanch of village Panchayat to stand as a surety who readily agreed. The demonstrator also helped Dewan Chand in securing the necessary tools and equipment.

THE BEGINNING

Dewan Chand started soap making with right earnestness. He was happy to begin a new life—a life in his own village. This time success could not give him a slip. He was soon recognised at the markets of Panipat as a maker of good soap.

Now Dewan Chand can look at himself with satisfaction tinged with pride. He has attained his life's goal. He has his own home, a good job to his liking, cattle which bring an extra earning and on the top of all, contentment.

But he has his problems too. His margin of profit is not very satisfactory. Dewan Chand has to compete with other soap manufacturers who are privileged to buy caustic soda at controlled price while he has to get it from the open market at an exorbitant price. Moreover, he has to pay an octroi of Rs. 1.75 per quintal of soap at Panipat.

These things. however, have no adverse effect on Dewan Chand. He makes about 40 to 60 kg. of soap daily and gets a net profit of about Rs. 6. Dewan Chand now hopes to open his own shop at Panipat.

This is the story of Dewan Chand. Many people in the rural areas are facing the same problem as Dewan Chand did at the beginning. They can learn from Dewan Chand that with courage, determination and hard work any problem can be solved.

(*Continued from page 1*)

BEWILDERING NAMES

Sir,

IN THE hierarchy of Panchayati Raj institutions, there are so many bewildering names that often puzzle even a literate person as to their distinction or oneness of meaning. For instance, here in Assam, we have three-tier system of Panchayati Raj *viz*. Gaon Panchayat at the lowest, the Anchalik Panchayat at the middle and the Mahkuma Parisad at the apex. The chief of each of these 'people's institutions' is legally termed as the President (*Sabhapati*) and the member as the *Sadasya*. But in different parts of the country, these institutions are termed differently such as, Gram Sabha, Anchal Panchayat, Anchal Samity, Zila Parisad, and so on and the President of the Gaon Sabha as 'Sarpanch' and its members as the 'Panches'. In some areas, the President of the Anchalik Panchayat is also known as the *Pradhan*.

In this way, one may come across lots of different names of the same institutions and offices in different parts of the country and a layman is bound to be confused about the true meaning of these terms. I do not understand why there should be so many bewildering designations of the workers engaged in the same work. I feel the same set of designations may well serve the purpose. For instance, the chief of the lowest unit of Panchayati Raj may be well designated as the President all over India without affecting in any way the spirit of democratic decentralisation. Similarly, the lowest institution of the Panchayat may be termed either as Gaon Panchayat or the Gram Panchayat. This will definitely help in neutralising confusion and bewilderment and facilitate clear understanding of he working of Panchayati Raj all over the country.

25-5-65
Kathiatali Dev Block,
Nowgong,
ASSAM.

Yours etc.
S. R. Deb Chaudhuri
Block Development Officer

B.D.O. & PANCHAYAT SAMITI

Sir,

THE ESTABLISMENT of the Panchayat Samitis with a wide devolution of powers by the State Governments has resulted in revolutionary change in the administrative set-up within the districts and Block areas. The B.D.O., who was playing a vital role in the Block administration, has been reduced in his position. Under the new decentralisation scheme—the Block Development Officer is merely the executive officer of the Panchayat Samiti. Besides his two official superiors—the S.D.O. and D.C.—now he has another person to serve. The Block Development Officer now receives order from the Chairman of the Panchayat Samiti, who is a non-official elected person. Unfortunately some of the B.D.O.s are not feeling happy over this change. They feel quite uncomfortable to work under the popular leaders. Sometimes the Technical Officers express their dissatisfaction over some of the activities of the Chairman. There appears to be a perpetual secret war between the Block Development Officer and the Technical Officers, on one side and the popular Chairman on the other. Conflicts have occurred on the petty issues like using office room, jeep, official noting etc.

The necessity of demarcating the lines of actions and specifying the powers and functions of the Chairman of Panchayat Samiti and Block Development Officer has been urgently felt. Their relations should be clearly determined and the B.D.O. should be directed to yield and adjust whenever there is a conflict on the jurisdiction and power.

21-5-65
Cuttack,
ORISSA

Yours etc.
B. B. Jena
Lecturer,
Ravenshaw College

SEETHANAGARAM HARIJAN COLONY

V. RAMALINGA REDDI

SEETHANAGARAM, a small village in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh has an interesting tale to tell. The village has not done a big thing to hit the headlines. But in its small way it has done something to deserve admiration from its counterparts all over the country. It has set a noble example for others to follow.

The village with a population of nearly a thousand lies on the bank of the river Sarada. The two rivers Sarada and Saraswati are known as sorrows of Visakhapatnam district, because they flood the area every year during the monsoon and cause serious havoc to the people. The harijans of Seethanagaram were perhaps the worst sufferers every year as they lived in thatched sheds, located just on the bank of the river. They experienced greatest havoc in November 1958 when the river was in high floods continuously for four days, causing great damage to many people and their property. All the officials and voluntary organisations rushed to the scene and saved many lives.

It was rightly realised that permanent measures were necessary to prevent the recurring flood damages. The government sanctioned a scheme of raising a bund to save all the villages, subjected to these floods every year.

But no effort was made to save the sixty-four harijan families of Seethanagaram from this annual ordeal. If pucca houses were provided to them they would not be rendered homeless during the rainy season.

The scheme for the construction of houses for harijans with Central Government grants came as a boon to them. But still something was lacking for the colony to spring up. After all the harijans who live on daily wages cannot think of constructing pucca houses with partial grants from the government. There was an urgent necessity of responsible leadership endowed with enthusiasm and sympathetic attitude to harijans. Luckily for the harijans, Seethanagaram had Suryanarayana Raju, a staunch protagonist of harijan welfare. So, when the Block authorities offered the scheme to all the villagers Shri Raju readily and quite willingly accepted it. The beginning was not good for him. He did not receive any cooperation from the rest of the villagers. They did not like the idea of providing pucca houses to harijans when most of them lived in thatched cottages. Shri Raju naturally felt nervous. He was never sure when the construction of all the houses for harijans would be over. But he was indomitable. He gave his own garden land of two acres for building up the harijan colony. The work was started. He collected donations from philanthropists and began his work under the guidance and supervision of Block authorities. He employed harijans only in the work from the beginning and completed the construction of sixty-four quarters within a year.

The harijan colony at Seethanagaram is second of its kind in the district of Visakhapatnam. It has added a new landmark to the village itself with its extensive site and well laid-out plain. The harijans have also contributed their mite in the shape of shramdan. One community centre has also been constructed. The harijans have laid out a park in the midst of the colony. The government has spent to the tune of Rs. 50,000 for this colony.

Today the harijans of Seethanagaram are proud of their colony. They are happy to live in pucca houses well ventilated. They keep their houses clean with utmost care. Every house is provided with a smokeless chula. The trainees of Gram Sevaks' Training Centre at Anakapalli during their village work laid an earthen road in the colony, and one kitchen garden for each family.

Needless to say that the entire credit for the construction of the colony goes to Shri Suryanarayana Raju. It is only because of his sincerity, patience and goodness he could complete the job for which the harijans will always remember him with respect. Shri Raju has proved that sincerity and hard work can make the impossible possible.

The trainees of Gram Sevaks' Training Centre are seen making a Kutcha road at Harijan Colony.

A FASCINATING EXPERIMENT

BIBHAS CHATTERJEE

"THANKS TO THIS Centre I have got an opportunity to build a career". Her face was lit with optimism. "You know when I was widowed I was treated by my family as a burden. I don't blame them, poverty destroys all feelings you see."

I looked at her. "I hope you are not finding it difficult to start afresh," I said.

"Not at all," she replied, "I was married when I was a student of class VIII. Now I am brushing my memory and learning new things to qualify for the examination. Even if the task is difficult, I must strive to perform it. I cannot take any more chance, you see. I have to make myself a useful member of the family, not just be a burden to it."

That widow and twenty-one others are just trying to make themselves useful to society. They are learning to stand on their own feet. And the Centre which has given them the scope to start their life afresh has been opened by Rajarhat Block Project Implementation Committee at village Rajarhat, Bishnupur in 24-Parganas district of West Bengal. The centre through a condensed training course prepares students for the School Final Examination.

The scheme was started on May 24, 1964 in a private building with one headmistress-*cum*-superintendent and two lady teachers. The three teachers and twenty-two students are living together as the scheme provides for residential training facilities.

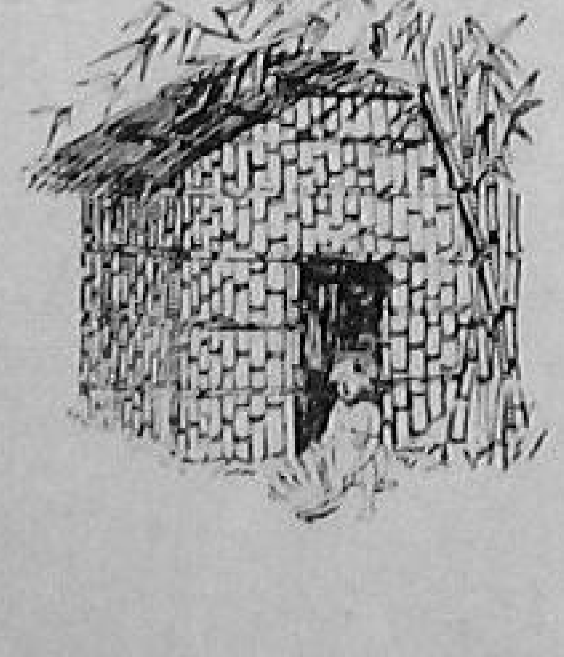
The age group of the students who were selected by a committee is between 20 and 35 and three of them are widows. Out of the 22 students, however, 15 are from the families of displaced persons from East Pakistan. The duration of the training course is two years and the first batch of students who are undergoing training at present will appear in the School Final Examination next year.

Lack of funds, however, has posed certain problems for the Centre. The Project Implementation Committee has sanctioned Rs. 35 per student by way of messing allowance and Rs. 5 for pocket expenses. The headmistress is finding it difficult to provide two square meals and tiffin to the students out of this meagre budget. Moreover, the students are expected to save enough from pocket money to buy the stationery they require and also to pay the fees for the School Final Examination.

Other things are lacking too. There is no provision for indoor games or extra-curricular activities. There are no furniture for students and teachers. The building where the Centre is housed is in derelict condition and does not offer any privacy or security to the inmates.

In spite of these needs, problems and difficulties, the whole Centre is bubbling with enthusiasm and energy and smacks of healthy atmosphere. To an outsider, it is a picture of life and energy. On being asked what is the source of such inspiration, the youngest member of the teaching staff who is still to be mistaken as a coy and cute student—having intelligence, smartness and vibrant enthusiasm on her beaming face, sharply replied' "It is a fascinating experiment, an experiment of infusing rays of life in lost souls. This novelty, this charm has attracted us towards this job, though the salary is very poor compared to our qualifications. Still we stick to it, since it is an experiment in rebuilding life."

Really the scheme is a "fascinating experiment" in the true sense of the term. The authorities deserve praise for designing such a realistic scheme which is pregnant with possibilities. But they must have a clear telescopic faculty to detect the problems and difficulties that have cropped up in the implementation of the scheme. The solution of all the present problems that the Centre is facing, will, no doubt, involve some additional expenditure, but such expenditure is indispensable if the scheme is to fulfil its cherished goal of rehabilitating a few lost souls.



FROM HERE AND THERE

DESERT GRAPES

EFFECTIVE STEPS were taken by Riyan Panchayat Samiti in Nagaur district of Rajasthan during 1964-65 to increase agricultural production. Successful experiments were made to grow American Cotton F-320 and grapes in the Samiti area most of which is in desert. Cultivation of American Cotton was done on a trial basis in Ladpura and Alaniavas Panchayat where 10 to 12 maunds were produced per bigha. Experiments for growing grapes in Badayali village have also proved fruitful.

* * *

RURAL INDUSTRIAL PROGRAMME

A SUM OF over Rs. 6 lakhs was spent under the Rural Industrial Programme of Nagaur district during 1964-65.

Eighteen persons were trained under the In-plant Training Scheme of the Programme. Fifty-one persons received training at the Nagaur Industrial Training Centre during the year under review in iron-smithy, carpentry and leather work. Electricians, fitters, wiremen and other craftsmen were also trained in large numbers at the Centre.

A sum of Rs. 2.66 lakhs was spent during the period for establishing a wool carding and shearing centre at Nagaur. Electroplating machines and other equipments were installed in the industrial workshop at a cost of Rs. 64,000.

* * *

NAWABGANJ ADJUDGED BEST BLOCK

A *Kalash* for the best block in the State was awarded to the Nawabganj Block of Gonda district of Uttar Pradesh. The Chief Minister, Smt. Sucheta Kripalani, on an earlier visit to the district, had announced to present *'Kalash'* to such Block of the district as showed the best total achievement.

A special prize 'Sucheta Cup' for outstanding shramdan work was bagged by the Gaisary Block of the district. A 10,000-strong voluntary irrigation force has been raised in the Block under the inspiring leadership of the Block Pramukh, Sri Devendra Pratap Singh, to take up minor irrigation schemes which include construction of 49-mile long channels, bunds and renovation of old tanks. The force has constructed 29 miles of channels and half-a-dozen bunds so far.

* * *

GOOD JOB BY NYAYA PANCHAYATS

NYAYA PANCHAYATS of Uttar Pradesh disposed of 84.87 per cent of cases during the quarter ended December last. This percentage was only 79.5 during the corresponding period in the previous year.

Out of a total of 1,32,665 cases, judgements were delivered in respect of 1,12,594 cases. Conciliation was effected through the good offices of these Panchayats in 56,092 cases.

For the early disposal of cases Nyaya Panchayats having many cases pending for a long time have been asked to observe 'Judgement Deliverance Week'.

* * *

BID TO INCREASE FARM PRODUCE

DEVELOPMENT Blocks in Himachal Pradesh distributed 1,08,217 kg. of improved seeds including 12,300 kg. of potatoes, 95,860 kg. of sugarcane, amongst farmers during the month of March last.

Distribution of chemical fertilizers was to the tune of 3,35,307 kg. Besides, 875 kg. of chemical pesticides and 328 kg. of green manure seeds were distributed.

During the month under review 1,36,978 tonnes of compost was prepared. With a view to demonstrating improved agricultural practices, 166 improved agricultural demonstration plots were laid out. Rat-killing campaign was carried out in an area of 8,576 hectares.

The number of kitchen gardens laid out was 933 while 1,41,465 vegetable seedlings and 261 kg. of vegetable seeds were distributed. Ninety-five orchards were laid out, 22,379 basins prepared for fruit plants and 5,216 fruit plants were distributed. The number of fruit plants sprayed was 85,539.

* * *

SECOND ZAID CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

THE ZAID campaign, second of its kind, has been launched in Uttar Pradesh with a special emphasis to the areas where irrigation facilities are available in summer months.

Under the campaign, farmers will be individually contacted by the extension workers for inspiring them to produce zaid crops. To give them impetus, farmers have been offered various kinds of facilities including irrigation, seeds, fertilizers, credit and crop production.

The campaign aims at increasing area as well as production of early or summer paddy in areas commanded by canals and tubewells, short duration zaid crops, legumes and non-legume fodders, zaid vegetables and sugarcane.

* * * *

CROP COMPETITION

SARVASHRI JODHAN Singh and Mokshamadan won the award of Rs. 300 and Rs. 250 respectively as first and second prizes for producing 27.40 and 21.60 quintals of paddy per acre at the district level crop competition for 1964-65 held by Ambikapur Development Block in Surguja district of Madhya Pradesh. One hundred and twelve persons participated in the competition at the village level, 17 at Block level and six persons competed at the district level.

The competition was organised for the first time in the district. The results of competition have greatly enthused the farmers and spurred them to achieve even larger production per acre.

* * * *

GUR COMPETITION

SHRI S. N. PATIL of Sawargaon (Dukare) in Buldana district have won the first prize of Rs. 800 in the Nagpur division for the highest production of gur per acre, in the competition organised by Maharashtra Government for the year 1963-64.

Shri Patil produced over 220 Bengali maunds of gur per acre. Shri R. O. Gosavi of Antmikote in Chikhali taluka has bagged the second prize of Rs. 400 in the competition.

* * * *

AWARD FOR MERITORIOUS WORK

THE RAJASTHAN Government has sanctioned two advance grade increments to Shri Nand Lal, Village Level Worker at present working in Neem-ka-Thana Panchayat Samiti of Sikar district for meritorious work.

For the last three years Shri Nand Lal has been successively getting the first prize at the district level in the Gram Sevak Competition.

Similarly, Shri Brij Mohan, VLW of Atru Panchayat Samiti, Shri Shiv Karan Singh, VLW of Udaipurwati, Shri Amee Chand and Shri Dhan Sukh Ram VLWs of Hanumangarh Panchayat Samiti have been awarded one advance grade increment each for their outstanding achievements in the Block areas.

* * * *

PANCHAYAT SAMITIS ADJUDGED BEST

A SUM OF Rs. 18,000 has been awarded to each of the Panchayat Samitis of Anta in Kota district, Mandore in Jodhpur, Siwana in Barmer, Shahpura in Bhilwara and Udaipurwati in Jhunjhunu district, which have been adjudged best in Rajasthan for their outstanding work during 1964-65.

Similarly, Kekri, Sanganer, Neem-ka-Thana, Taleda, Sirohi, Riyan, Jalor, Chhoti Sadari, Kelayat, Hanumangarh, Rajgarh (Churu), Govindgarh (Alwar), Bayana, Nadoti, Tonk, Pirawa, Jaisalmer, Bali, Talwara, Simalwara and Bhindar Panchayat Samitis have been adjudged best at the district level and awarded Rs. 10,000 each for their outstanding performance during the last year.

The awards will be spent on development works in the respective Panchayat Samiti areas.

* * * *

RISE IN PER CAPITA INCOME

HARD AND sustained efforts have paid rich dividends to the people of Jamitpura village in Bundi district of Rajasthan. The *per capita* income of the people of the village has now gone up to Rs. 1,166 per year. The village has been adjudged the best in regard to agriculture production.

The cultivators are making full use of irrigation facilities from Chambal Canals and have started even growing rice and sugarcane. Shri Keshav, a farmer of Jamitpura village, has been awarded prize in the State level competition for sugarcane output.

* * * *

'KAKI' CAMP IN SEONDHA BLOCK

VILLAGE women are participating shoulder to shoulder with their men folk in the development activities in the Datia district of Madhya Pradesh. To further enlist cooperation of the women folk a three-day camp of elderly ladies, known as *Kaki Shivir* was recently held in the model village of Sirsa of the Seondha Block. In this camp *kakis* from about a dozen village participated. They were trained in agriculture, animal husbandry, social service, health and allied activities by the Block officials. They were convinced that the women could play a useful role in development works. The *kakis* returned to their villages enthused with a mission to work for the upliftment of women folk.

* * * *

BACHAT VILLAGE

ALL THE 260 cultivators of Khamgaon-Jattu village in Mehkar taluka of Maharashtra, which has become a bachatgram, have now come under the fold of small savings scheme.

TOWARDS A BETTER TOMORROW

A field of abundance with golden corn, enough to feed the millions of the country is what we are all striving for. We are, however, still far from the goal of plenty, but we are marching steadily and confidently towards it. For a big country with a growing population, this is not an easy task. But, no self-respecting nation can depend on food imports to meet its most vital need.

After Independence the Government has laid stress on increasing food production. Self-sufficiency in food is a 'must' if the constant drain of foreign exchange has to be stopped. For this purpose the Government is helping the farmers with chemical fertilizers, improved seed and agricultural implements, irrigation facilities, etc. In the Community Development programme, increased agricultural production is the first priority. There is today a wide consciousness in the villages of the necessity of growing more.

This striking photograph of a smiling face in a smiling paddy field in Kerala, shows that we are moving ahead towards our goal. The paddy ears, swaying in the breeze, give an assurance of continued prosperity and the eventual realisation of the promised millenium.

Most of the villages have power driven pumping sets for irrigating fields. The picture shows how children are enjoying the water gushing out of a pump.

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